

7-13-94

MM 93-48

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DOCKET FILE COPY ORIGINAL

APR 20 1995

Sir:

~~INTERNAL SECURITY INFORMATION~~
OFFICE OF SECRETARY

Thank you for your effort
to address the need for better
children's TV. - The content -
time schedule are so important.
And a consistent uninterrupted
program is important for
our young viewers.

Thank you.

Mrs. Forest S. Eoute
179 Prairie Plains Rd
Hillsboro, TN
37342

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MM 43-40

APR 11

DOCKET FILE

Washington, D.C.
July 1994
ORIGINAL

The Honorable **FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION**
OFFICE OF SECRETARY Reed Hundt

Federal Communications Commission
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. Hundt,

On behalf of the Richland
County F. C. E., I would request
that the guidelines for enforce-
ment of the Children's Television
Act of 1990 be strengthened.

We need more educational and
informational programs to be
shown at times when children
are most likely to be watching.
Children need special consideration.
They are the country's future.

Respectfully yours,
Rachel Fixen

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Honorable Reed Hunt
Chairman FCC
Washington, DC

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APR 20 1995

July 14
DOCKET FILE COPY ORIGINAL

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF SECRETARY

Dear Sir

I believe in the broad purposes of education
ala TV. To accomplish this we need to
have leadership in this particular part of
the television industry. Some board or group
must assess the needs and set up
guidelines to accomplish them. The urgency
is here and should not be delayed. I
have a few specific areas which I
feel should be considered.

Our children right now are very much in
need of solid information what it means to
be a patriotic American citizen. Locally
4th graders were to make posters for Memorial
Day about veterans. many had no idea
whatsoever. There used to be a Young
Citizens League in schools it taught us
older citizens well — why not something
like that on TV?

Another area where education is needed
is in developing healthy eating habits. 53%
of children go to school without breakfast. Bad
for developing bodies and hurts studying
mental concentration. Other good health
habits concerning exercise, sleep, abstaining
from drugs, safety certainly need attention.

Search out young people who have
developed mind broadening hobbies, such
as stamp collecting, rocks/shells, bird
watching, caring for environment and
show them on TV thereby encouraging
peer pride.

If we can teach our young people
how to avoid the negatives and go for the
positive experiences, great results should
be accomplished.

Sincerely

Marjorie Ray, Box 237 Harkness MD 20634

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171493-48

DOCKET FILE COPY ORIGINAL

Dear Sirs:

I am writing to ask you to strengthen the guidelines for enforcement of the Children's Television Act of 1990. We would like to see more educational and informational programs for children and the family during times when children can watch. We believe television is a great tool for helping educate our children.

The topics discussed on afternoon talk shows are not topics children should hear or see. We hope this can change.

We would like to see that children's needs are considered when programs are developed.

We like "Educational television's": Nova, Nature programs, Reading Rainbow and Sesame. We are happy to hear that "Christy" will return. We also like "Dr. Quinn".

We hope you will do what you can to get quality programs, especially for our children and grandchildren.

RECEIVED

APR 20 1995

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF SECRETARY

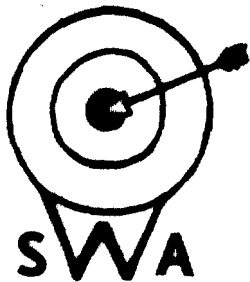
Thank you -

Sincerely,

Jean Nash

17230 70 St SE
Wahseton, N. Dak. 58075No. of Copies rec'd
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Kids Are My Business
in 30 minutes
Lakeview, Oregon 97630
(503) 947-2931

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APR 20 1995

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF SECRETARY

February 28, 1994

Reed E. Hundt, Chairman
FCC
1919 MTs., NW.
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Mr. Hundt:

I request that the major networks provide a one hour TV program appropriate for young Children.

Sincerely,

Stanley Wonderley
Stanley Wonderley

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MAR 9 9 26 AM '94

HAND INFORMATION
COMMUNICATIONS
INVESTIGATION

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MM 93-48

4 4 10 PM '94

Reed E. Hundt, Chairman
FCC
1919 "M" St., NW
Washington, DC 20554

DOCKET FILE COPY ORIGINAL
February 28, 1995
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APR 20 1995
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF SECRETARY

Dear Mr. Hundt:

I am requesting that the major networks provide a one hour TV program appropriate for young children.

Sincerely,

Ellen Wonderley
Ellen Wonderley

RECEIVED
MAR 9 9 26 AM '95
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

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FEB 15 3 1994



IMAGES
AT THE CENTER

INSTITUTE FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY IN FILM MEDIA

DOCKET FILE COPY ORIGINAL

APR 26 1995

COMMUNICATIONS SECTION

February 10, 1994

Honorable Chairman Reed Hundt
Federal Communication Commission
1919 M Street N.W. Room 814
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Chairman Hundt;

Our organization has formed a multidisciplinary "think tank" to define the significant characteristics which enable film and television to influence positive, *prosocial* awareness, attitudes and behaviors. **We will provide TV/filmmakers and educators with information they may use to reduce crime and violence and increase social responsibility.**

Images at the Center may be a name that is new to you. Our board of advisors is comprised of film and television writers, producers and directors who are committed to using their art to make a positive difference in society. Our research team represents anthropology, education, film production, film studies, mass communication, psychology and sociology. Our highly qualified staff is firmly committed to our project and its potential for positive change.

I hope you will keep us in mind as you move forward, Mr. Chairman. Certainly, reducing the negative influence in film and television is necessary. However, by providing *positive* models of influence, our society can move even more quickly toward a healthier global community.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Genette Eaton
President and Executive Director

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Images at the Center

Institute for Socially Responsible Media

Film and television are two of the most powerful mediums of influence our world has ever known. Unfortunately, research has focused almost exclusively on proving the media's influence is negative. As a result, researchers seem to have become "stuck" in this negative paradigm; they do not seem to have considered the incredible power the media has as a positive, prosocial agent of change.

Our focus opposes the negative paradigm. We operate on the premise that sufficient data exists to indicate film and television do, indeed, have some degree of influence on viewers' awareness, attitudes and behaviors. Our goal is to understand how to develop and maximize the positive, prosocial aspects of this influence. We will then provide that knowledge to film and TV producers, writers, directors and actors so they may deliberately use their art as a powerful, proactive change agent.

To do so, IMAGES AT THE CENTER is conducting a multidisciplinary research project integrating literature on media's ability to influence behavior. In addition, we are conducting three types of field research: we are examining the entertainment industry, the general viewing audience, and the national education system. Guidelines and strategies will be developed from this research and provided to TV/filmmakers to augment their existing creative intuition and knowledge.

The project consists of five phases:

Phase I: Research	Phase II: Develop	Phase III: Implement & Evaluate	Phase IV: Disseminate Information	Phase V: Adjust
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This interdisciplinary project will include anthropology, education, psychology, sociology, film studies, and film production.

Members of our Advisory Council and staff are exceptionally qualified professionals from business, research, academic, film and television communities.

The organizational philosophy on which the project is founded includes a clear purpose/mission statement: "IMAGES AT THE CENTER offers research, education, consulting services, application/distribution avenues and recognition opportunities which enable film and television makers to use their art in the service of humanity." Our philosophy also is founded on a clear, principle-centered vision, a belief in freedom of artistic expression and strong support of artistic intuition. As a result of our philosophy, we strive to be a resource to media so they may achieve their own goals of a healthier global community.

This organization is unique: it addresses a need that is not filled by any other agency related to social issues, change or film/television. That is, advocacy groups play an essential role by providing awareness and arousing interest in issues (i.e., environment, violence). They focus on "what." Film festivals and schools provide viewing/distribution opportunities and professional skill building. They focus on "craft." IMAGES AT THE CENTER focuses on "how"—how to change awareness, attitudes and behaviors, how to move viewers to take action so they make a personal impact, how to make change long lasting. For film and television makers who dream of using their art in the service of humanity, we provide information no other organization provides so that artists may make their dream a reality.

The acting fiscal agent for IMAGES AT THE CENTER is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization that works in the entertainment industry. IMAGES AT THE CENTER is seeking not-for-profit, tax exempt status.



LIM 93-20

Learning Methods International, Inc.
49 Rustic Trail Flemington, NJ 08822
1-800-315-9402

November 17, 1994

The Honorable Reed Hundt
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, N. W.
Suite 814
Washington, D. C. 20554

Dear Mr. Hundt:

I know you have the contact, knowledge and expertise to help us achieve our goal of creating a high tech computer manufacturing facility in a to be determined location in the United States that will employ more than one thousand workers who are now on welfare and other public assistance. Any significant employment opportunities; any improvement in academic achievement; and, any access to new technologies that improve the quality of life in low socio-economic communities makes the Nation more competitive in a global economy.

Learning Methods International, Inc. ("LMI") has demonstrated its ability to collaborate with various community groups and School Districts to provide an effective supplemental educational program that extends the school day (increasing time on task) by making a certified teacher available, on demand, to all students. LMI is positioning itself to offer through school districts and other community based organizations affordable desktop videoconferencing systems that would be the hardware required to deliver on demand live and video interactive supplemental programs. Examples are: The Homework Hotline; Job training; GED; Community College extension courses; Coordinated Social Services; and, on line textbooks, reference libraries, etc. LMI's focus is on the 25 million households in low socio-economic areas in the United States. Each household and community based study center that receives an LMI desk top system will pay a monthly rental of up to \$25 (twenty five dollars) per month per system. If a system is rented for 36 consecutive months, the cost would be reduced to \$12.50 per month. An affordable security deposit may be required. The first of these desk top systems will be installed in community centers in Bridgeton and Vineland, New Jersey in January 1995. By January 1, 2000, LMI will have systems in 500,000 study centers and 2.5 million households in the United States. By prioritizing BRI installations, utilization of a software based codec and through volume purchase agreements, LMI will offer a cost of installations to households and study centers that will likely not exceed the cost of installing a regular telephone line. Volume purchase agreements with telephone carriers will permit LMI to offer lower cost monthly reoccurring line charges to its clients. Installation cost for cable and wireless access to LMI programming is expected to be negligible, but is still being studied. LMI will be a major force in the educational programming market. It will directly control its programming and hardware requirements. Its program distribution will be handled by major telecommunication partnerships, including, telephone, cable and wireless companies. The International Community has expressed an interest in LMI programming. Although the world community is critical of Education in the United States,

When students have questions only teachers can answer...Someone cares...call LMI

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American educators are the most sought after in the world as exchange professors, lecturers, etc. LMI expects to connect Educators in the United States with students throughout the world.

Today's student has grown up in a video interactive environment. Most make use of the technology by becoming challenged by video games. High game scores in games that increase in complexity are achieved routinely by students who are the lowest academic achievers. Since video games require interactive technology, new learning experiences must of necessity become associated with this technology. The challenge to educators has been how to adapt this new video interactive technology to low socio-economic communities in a manner consistent with improved learning. Two approaches have been taken to video interactive learning. The popular approach requires that all information, i.e., encyclopedias, textbooks, reference materials, etc., be placed on a compact disk. A student seeking information must have purchased a multi media computer and appropriate disks. Most multi media computers average \$2,500.00. Programs on disks are costly. These computers and their related programming have a short useful life because the hardware cannot handle, without costly upgrade, live video interactive programs. Additionally, purchasers are constantly asked to purchase updated versions of programs.

The second approach to video interactive learning is live interactive programming. This concept brings a live teacher, trainer, lawyer, accountant, social service interviewer, probation officer, bank officer, psychiatrist or other preferred professional on demand to all having in home or community access to a desktop videoconferencing system. Desktop videoconferencing systems have been supplied to school districts for evaluation purposes only. The cost of this hardware is \$7,000 to \$12,000 per system. Through the use of these systems, specialized instruction is provided to Advanced Placement Course students. There are no demonstration projects involving low socio-economic students, or students who are grossly underachieving.

The United States Department of Education has concluded that the policy of providing remedial instruction to underachieving students has failed to produce more learning and increase test scores. In fact, Title I of a bill which was enacted in the summer of 1994 as an amendment to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 clearly requires educators to recognize that a means of increasing the students time on task will better help disadvantaged children meet high standards. A section of the amendment clearly states that:

REFORMS TARGETED ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS TO ENABLE PARTICIPATING CHILDREN TO MEET THE CHALLENGING STATE STANDARDS.

Targeted assistance schools (schools that are ineligible or have not opted for a schoolwide approach) will use funds for programs for children who are failing, or most at risk of failing, to meet the State's performance standards. Those programs must give primary consideration to extended-time strategies, be based on what research shows is most effective in teaching and learning, and involve accelerated curricula, effective instructional strategies, strong coordination with the regular program and highly qualified and trained staff. Title I programs that rely on drill

and practice or fail to increase the quality and amount of instructional time will no longer meet the requirements of the law. Like schoolwide program schools, targeted assistance schools must orient their programs toward enabling children served by Title I to meet the challenging State performance standards.

The most effective means of extending time on task, extending the school day and increasing community involvement in education is to employ on demand live video interactive instruction. The desktop videoconferencing system to be manufactured and distributed by LMI is the system of choice for delivering on demand live one on one instruction. Little attention has been paid to the fact that these systems have the ability to bring on line into homes and communities all superinformation highway entertainment, educational, internet, job training, reference libraries, public access programming, etc. at an affordable price as compared to digital television and other offerings of tomorrow. These systems are computers with extended useful lives (more than 15 years) because they are built to deliver specific software based applications, rather than merely to meet competitive specifications.

New technology has always found its way into low socio-economic communities last. Business has opted to recover high cost of development over the shortest period of time. This resulted in pricing strategies that restricted product marketing to the largest corporations and the top 1 per cent of the wealthiest citizens. Telephones, televisions, computers and automobiles are a few examples. Thus far, all of the telecommunications companies competing for program access, and distribution on the superinformation highway are competing for what amounts to 10 per cent of the total market. Ninety per cent of the market is represented, in part, by the 25 million households that are classified as low socio-economic. Even hardware manufacturers have priced systems such that only businesses, lower middle and higher classes, can afford to purchase them. Rental marketing strategies have been most effective in providing affordable high cost high technologies to low socio-economic communities, i.e. Bell Telephone. Without a substantial government subsidy, this society will become the forgotten society, as this technology would start a life cycle long after products have matured.

LMI can not only provide jobs for public welfare and general assistance recipients, and affordable hardware to low socio-economic communities without costly government subsidy, but it can uniquely provide cost effective live interactive and video interactive educational hardware and programs to Title I schools and communities in a manner that best satisfies the new requirements of the recent amendments to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, including but not limited to:

Improving the basic programs offered by local educational agencies;

Providing more effective even start family literacy programs;

Improving the education of migratory children;

Improving the education of neglected and delinquent youths in homes, in detention, in residential and custodial care, on probation and on home monitoring; and

Improving Indian Programs.

Beginning as a national seven day a week twenty four hour per day telephone tutorial service in 1991, LMI, an African American owned and operated business, now serves more than ninety thousand students in thirteen school districts. LMI will provide each of its teachers, more than 1000, with desktop videoconferencing systems. These will, with few exceptions, provide the individualized instruction specific to the curriculum (using the same textbook) being offered in that student's school districts without regard to whether the call originated from a community center, private residence, place of detention, day care facility or any other location with access.

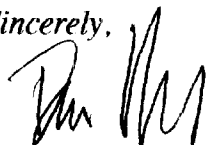
Change is essential to progress. LMI has the opportunity to effect positive change in low socio-economic communities now by providing meaningful long term employment opportunities. LMI will train and hire 1000 workers for its manufacturing facility. Nine hundred of these workers will be taken from Welfare and other public assistance programs. As the manufacturing facility grows, it will give priority to training and hiring first those on welfare and other public assistance. These would make excellent workers and better citizens, as a result of having increased self esteem. Most of the work opportunities involve assembly line activities in a clean, pollution free plant. Salaries are expected to approximate that of entry level automobile workers. Over the next five years, the Federal Government will save millions in reduced welfare costs; will have assisted in the development of a large profitable minority business; will have saved billions in other social program spending resulting from a better educated and more responsible members of society; and, will have saved the billions in subsidies required to bring this technology to low socio-economic communities.

LMI would like for you to identify funds that you may use at your discretion to issue to LMI in the form of a planning grant in the amount of \$400,000. This would allow us to formalize feasibility and business plans; to formalize technical manufacturing and product plans; and, to cover the cost of staff and other administrative expense. This process will take approximately nine months from the date of first draw down of the funds. Next, LMI seeks a low interest loan, or loan guarantee, in the amount of \$6,000,000 from a State or Federal Authority for land acquisition, site preparation, construction, assembly line equipment, initial inventory, employee training and working capital. If it is not within your powers to issue a grant, or loan guarantee, to LMI, perhaps you can identify sources within the Federal Government where grant funds, and loan funds for our purposes can be found, and issue a letter in support of our request. Within twenty four months from the date of loan closing, the factory can begin operation. In the interim, LMI will continue to purchase computers, making necessary modifications to make them suitable for delivering LMI programming to homes and study centers now.

In addition to assisting us in getting a grant and a loan, you may be able to direct us to cable and wireless companies who would see value in distributing our programming. Every Federal Agency could use our service in one form or another. We need doors opened. As we work

together we'll see other emerging opportunities. I will call you in a few days to get your thoughts. I am excited about the prospects. If you have questions in this regard, please call me at 1-800-315-9402.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Napier', with a stylized, cursive script.

*David Napier
General Manager*



MCI Telecommunications
Corporation

Business Markets
MCI Center
Three Ravinia Drive
Atlanta, Georgia 30346-2102

MCI Business Markets
NEWS

Contact: Albert B. Kelly
Tri-County Community Action Agency
609/451-6330

David Napier
Learning Methods International, Inc.
215/334-7543

Debbie Caplan
MCI Business Markets
610/660-7974

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**HOMEWORK HOTLINE'S ADVANCED TELECOMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY
CONNECTS STUDENTS WITH 'ROUND THE CLOCK HELP**

BRIDGETON, NJ, August 25, 1994 -- Help with homework will be just a phone call away, when a new Homework Hotline rings in the school year for fifth through eighth-grade students in Salem and Bridgeton schools.

The program, developed by Learning Methods International, Inc. (LMI), utilizing MCI's telecommunications technology, was funded by Tri-County Community Action Agency in order to help area students access the infohighway.

"Everybody has a telephone," said Albert B. Kelly, director of Tri-County Community Action Agency and member of the Bridgeton Board of Education. "By contracting with LMI and MCI, we pick up the tolls, so students can get on with the business of learning."

- More -

PROOF POSITIVE
FROM MCI

Tri-County Community Action Agency today announced that it will fund the Homework Hotline program in two phases. Phase one will begin on September 7, when fifth through eighth-graders will be able to dial a toll-free, 24-hour-a-day, seven-day-a-week MCI 800 number. The number will connect them with teachers on-call to tutor homework assignments covering a variety of subjects.

"We plan to roll out phase two in October," said Kelly. "At that point, students from kindergarten through 12th grade will be able to dial for assistance."

While the concept of homework hotlines has been around for 15 years, LMI's Homework Hotline utilizes advanced telecommunications technology, making it more flexible for student end-users.

"LMI worked with MCI to develop the Homework Hotline in response to individual student needs," said David Napier, general manager of LMI. "While one student may seek homework help immediately after school hours, another may not reach that point until sometime after dinner. In fact, our heaviest traffic is usually seen between 8:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m."

LMI's Homework Hotline uses a database of teachers who activate or de-activate themselves from the database depending on whether or not they are available to tutor. By contracting with teachers in different time zones, the Homework Hotline is able to operate efficiently around the clock.

"Other homework hotlines require a bank of teachers to assemble at a designated place and time," said Terry Connell, branch manager for MCI Business Markets in central New Jersey. "Using MCI's network, teachers can sign on and off of LMI's Homework Hotline anytime from anywhere they want."

MCI Enhanced Call Router (ECR) and 800 Service drive the Homework Hotline by directing students to the most appropriate tutor on-call. Through a series of voice menu prompts and the caller's touch tone selections, the Homework Hotline asks each caller to identify his/her school district, grade level and the subject matter he/she wishes to discuss. The system first seeks to identify teachers on duty within the student's school district. If none are available, using MCI's ECR feature called Take Back & Transfer (TNT), the system takes back the call and transfers it to a subject and grade-appropriate teacher who is currently signed on to the nationwide system.

Homework Hotline tutors are certified teachers who work from their homes, choose their own hours and are compensated by LMI at an hourly rate as independent contractors. LMI's requires that teachers must have been actively teaching during the past five years in order to participate in the program.

- More -

To date, more than 90,000 New Jersey students attend schools that subscribe to LMI's Homework Hotline. The program currently serves 11 New Jersey school districts, including Bridgeton, Salem, Camden, Willingboro, Palmyra, Kenilworth, Garfield, Garwood, Union, Jersey City and Roselle.

Tri-County Community Action Agency is a non-profit organization dedicated to improving the quality of life for residents in Cumberland, Gloucester and Salem counties in New Jersey. Working through government agencies and private organizations, Tri-County Community Action Agency secures grants to fund and implement educational and other community programs.

Learning Methods International, Inc. (LMI) provides comprehensive educational distant learning programs designed to improve the academic performance of students from kindergarten through college. The company uses a multi-dimensional approach to solve problems, apply knowledge and improve test scores of all students through an innovative computerized technological approach. Information Line, Homework Hotline, and video interactive programs developed by LMI are provided to school districts through not-for-profit community-based service providers at no cost to participating school districts or students.

MCI Business Markets is based in Atlanta and provides long distance voice, data and video telecommunications to America's businesses. MCI Communications Corporation, headquartered in Washington, D.C., offers a full range of domestic and global telecommunications services through one of the world's largest state-of-the-art networks. With 1993 revenue of nearly \$12 billion, the company is the second largest long distance provider in the United States and has more than 65 offices in 58 countries and places.

#

DIAL-A-TEACHER



Staff Photo By GARY COOPER

Terrin Walker, a freshman at Bridgeton High School, demonstrates how to work the Homework Hotline, to be introduced in Bridgeton schools this year.

Phone call now gives help with homework

By MICHAEL GANNON
Staff Writer

Imagine having help with math homework available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Or getting an explanation of a point in grammar, history or science.

That help now will be available for students in the Bridgeton School District. And all it will take is a phone call.

The Tri-County Community Action Agency introduced the Homework Hotline at the Bridgeton School District's Bank Street Administration building Thursday morning.

and MCI Business Markets, the hotline will allow students to dial up a nation-wide network of teachers available for assistance in subject matters for grades kindergarten through 12. The service will be provided at no cost to the district or students.

"One of President Clinton's goals for education is to link the private sector and the public schools," said Albert Kelly, a member of the Bridgeton Board of Education and director of Tri-County, which is sponsoring the program. "This something I believe is truly innovative."

Kelly said the program will be phased in begin-

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Hotline offers kids help with homework

By MATT GRAY
Staff Writer

BRIDGETON — The information superhighway is speeding into Salem City schools.

Representatives from Tri-County Community Action Agency, Learning Methods International (LMI) and MCI unveiled the Homework Hotline here Thursday, a nationwide system which will provide inquisitive students with a 24-hour, seven-day-a-week tutor.

Students in grades five through

eight in Salem and Bridgeton can avail themselves of this new service when school begins Sept. 7 in time to get help on the first school night's homework assignments. Students in kindergarten through grade 12 will be able to utilize the system in October.

Developed by LMI, students call an 800 number, and the automated MCI system asks their grade level, subject matter in question and offers them the opportunity to select a teacher of their choice by typing in a special code. A touch-
(See **HOMEWORK**, page A-7)

Homework

(Continued from page A-1)

tone phone is required. Tri-County will pick up the cost of the calls.

Salem Middle School Principal Gwendolyn Alston said this program will help prepare student for the future, and get Salem schools on the much talked-about "superhighway."

Salem has been working extensively in this area, Alston said, gradually building its computer resources. "We're very excited about it," Alston said. "We're ready and raring to go."

Teachers interested in helping students call in to let the system know that they are available. The system first tries to locate an appropriate tutor within the students district. If none are available, the system searches the nationwide database for help.

Homework Hotline tutors are certified teachers who are compensated for their time by LMI. The LMI program currently serves 11 school districts in New Jersey.

"We're bridging the gap between home and school," said LMI General Manager David Napier. While new technologies are usually available first to the more affluent,

this program changes that. "What we've done is pretty much reverse that trend," Napier said.

The system is "truly innovative," said Albert Kelly, director of Tri-County and a Bridgeton board of education member.

Bridgeton students demonstrated the system before local officials and the press at the district's administration building. A demonstration of the Spanish speaking version went awry when the system connected a member of Tri-County with someone not interested in high-technology or tutoring. "What do you want," came a voice over the speaker phone. When the caller began speaking Spanish, the woman on the other end broke the connection. "Somebody had a cake in the oven and they had to get back," Kelly joked.

While homework hotlines have been around for many years, this is a more flexible arrangement, officials explained. In the past, teachers would gather in a central location to field calls. Now they can do so from the convenience of their own homes.

Salem Journal

HOTLINE CHASES HOMEWORK BLUES

Five Jersey school districts join phone tutoring program

By LISA PETERSON

Public school students in Roselle, Kenilworth, Garwood, Union Township and Camden need only pick up the phone when they want help with their homework.

The school districts are participating in a Learning Methods International Inc. program called Homework Hotline, which provides students with a toll-free number for help with their studies at home.

Teachers who sign up for the service are paid \$20 an hour, and each has a personal identification number that can be used to direct a student caller to a particular teacher.

The Pennsylvania-based Learning Methods receives grants through private industry to operate the hotline, so there is no cost to participating school districts.

Available to students seven days a week, 24 hours a day, the system is programmed to give students access to teachers in their districts, but if none is available the call is transferred to a teacher from a participating district.

The service is available on a year-to-year basis and continues with the school superintendent's approval.

Phyllis Napier, director of public relations for Learning Methods, said the company is "in the information dissemination business, and the hotline provides the opportunity for the student to get assistance whenever it's needed."

She added the subjects available through the hotline are tailored for each district's needs, and students from all grades can participate.

"They can ask any homework questions," Napier said. "There may be a particular problem they are faced with, or they may have more general types of questions."

Napier said students are assisted "in realizing an answer." Students cannot call up and ask the teacher for an answer to a problem without having worked it out themselves.

"When a student comes across a problem in the middle of their homework, they're not going to get a quick answer. The hotline will provide the methodology" for arriving at an answer, Napier said.

She added the goal of the program is to improve student test scores.

"Math is the major reason they call," said Union Township School Superintendent James Caulfield. He said students are defeating themselves if they try to just get an answer to a problem without working it out.

He said that when they give an answer in class, "they're going to have to be able to defend it."

Caulfield said schoolwork today is more complicated, and not all parents may be able to help their children.

"In high school, there are three years of math required now for graduation. It used to be one and two years," Caulfield said.

Union Township, Roselle, Camden and Garwood have used the hotline since November, and Kenilworth signed on last month.

As of Jan. 6, 192 calls to the hotline had been received from Union Township students, 303 from Roselle, 93 from Garwood, 50 from Kenilworth and 469 from Camden.

"We're receiving calls from par-

ents championing and celebrating this event," Caulfield said. "The child is not simply home on their own (when doing homework), the school system is giving him or her a tutor."

Kenilworth Superintendent Lloyd Leschuk said the service could not be more convenient, "because everybody has a phone at home. There's somebody for the student to talk to and not wait until tomorrow" for help with a problem.

Roselle Superintendent George Sliwiak said, "What this has done for us is expand the educational opportunities for kids. We've extended ourselves to recognition of language barriers" in the district by providing teachers who can speak in the native language of Hispanic and Haitian students.

Napier said Learning Methods started offering the service about two years ago and has a data base of more than 1,000 teachers nationwide.

Union County School Superintendent Leonard Fitts said the hotline is "a valuable tool in the whole communication process between the school, parents, caregivers and education."

"It's another piece of technology in education," Fitts added. "It's something that has a direct impact on the kids. I'd like to see all of the districts in Union County sign up for the hotline."

Leschuk noted many calls to the hotline are actually from parents. He said they are often seeking assistance to help their children with their homework, even though "some parents don't want to admit they're having problems" solving a problem.

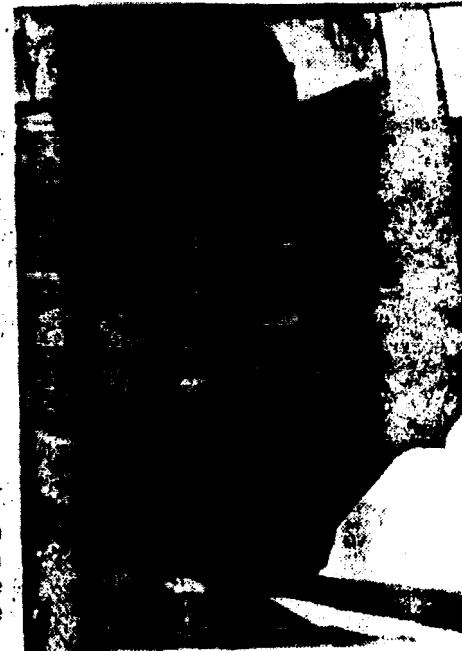
Napier said there is no evidence available yet to determine whether

test scores have improved in districts using the hotline because the service is relatively new.

Corey Green, a 12-year-old student at the Leonard V. Moore School in Roselle, said he called the hotline once with a math problem and "it helped me a lot."

Photo by Kathleen W. Perlett

(Right) Sherquan Hargrove, a fifth-grader at Leonard V. Moore Middle School, uses the toll-free Homework Hotline



Homework help is a phone call away

By CHERYL NEHL

THE CHRONICLE

Who says you can't get something for nothing? Parents and children living in towns like Kenilworth or Garwood will soon find the answers to homework woes just a phone call away.

The frustration that parents and students experience when homework problems arise may soon be a thing of the past thanks to an innovative program available to elementary schools in New Jersey.

Towns such as Garwood, Kenilworth, Union, Roselle and Plainfield have recognized the benefits such programs can offer students, teachers and parents. In fact, Garwood should be on line in the next week and the Kenilworth Board of Education typed this week to bring the new program into Harding School.

The homework hotline, operated by Learning Methods International (LMI) of Paris is a no-cost program designed to increase test scores, improve communication between parents and teachers, as well as enhancing the learning experience of students. Most important, it will not cost the school or parents a single penny, since it is funded by grants from public and private sources.

Students and parents will be able to dial a toll-free 800 number and after choosing a subject and grade level, talk to a teacher regarding homework assignments and classroom lessons. The hotline will operate 24 hours, seven days a week.

The program also offers an information line and teleconferencing. The information line is a special voice mailbox created for each

teacher in a school. This permits parents and students to access teachers by calling a toll-free number. Teachers can leave a general message regarding homework assignments or other information for his or her entire class. All students are given a personal identification number for their particular teacher

or teachers. This way, if a student forgets to write down an assignment, the problem is easily solved.

But the advantages of the hotline do not stop there. In addition, personalized and confidential messages may be received by all students and parents. Messages, however, can only be received by the intended student or parent via an individualized password.

Teleconferencing provides the opportunity for students to attend SAT review courses on each of the four Saturdays immediately prior to the test date. This program provides special academic programs and public lecturers.

There are special incentives for a school district to take on LMI's program, including the \$20 per-hour additional income for teachers who wish to participate. Although LMI is programmed to access local teachers first, if none are available, the system will automatically transfer the student to teachers from another district.

Free computers based on 275 hours of student calls (complements of IIM and LMI), management reports showing utilization by student, teacher, subject and school and the fact there is no cost at all to the school or students is reason enough for small schools districts like Kenilworth and Garwood to climb aboard. There also is



Fourth-grader Anthony Fabre makes a telephone call to the Homework Hotline, a 24-hour service designed to help students with their homework and classroom assignments.

a \$20,000 college scholarship awarded annually.

And although there are many school systems coming on line with LMI, all school districts will have a personalized local custom menu when dialing the hotline number identified, for example, as "The Harding School Homework Hotline." Where is the catch, you ask? But how does a company like LMI offer a program like this for free? According to Phyllis Napier, director of public relations for LMI, the program is funded by public and private sources that cover the full cost of its administration and operation. In any subject. And it is free.

For Garfield kids, homework help is a phone call away

By CYRIL TUOHY
The Herald & News

2/25/93

The phone lines will be open 24 hours a day, seven days a week and staffed by teachers, who will be paid \$20 an hour.

GARFIELD — City high school students soon will have an alternative to head-scratching when faced with such knotty homework problems as:

What is the square root of pi? Is there a difference between a metaphor and an allegory? Which river was it that George Washington tossed a coin across?

Help is just a 1-800 number away. Students won't be given the answers, but

qualified teachers will be able to help students solve those problems by themselves — thanks to an innovative program already in place in four Union County school districts.

Garfield students now will be able to

tackle tough homework problems 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Garfield is the first district in Bergen County to offer their students the program developed by the Pennsylvania-based Learning Methods International.

"It seems like a good idea," said senior Phil Benanti, an honors student, citing a tutoring program already in existence which has met with strong demand.

School officials have hailed the program as a way of providing students with ways to answer problems after school hours and expect the program to catch on rapidly.

"It will allow kids to have access to

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HOMEWORK

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teachers not in the answers but in the methodology," said Schools Superintendent Robert Van Zanten.

Parents, sometimes rusty with their high school academics, will also be spared the embarrassment of not being able to do high school work.

With passage of tonight's resolution authorizing the school to enter into an agreement with LMI, the company will recruit Garfield teachers from every subject offered by the school, said Michael Melendez, LMI's director of operations.

Participating teachers would be paid \$20 an hour for the time they spend tutoring students over the phone and students would have access to teachers familiar with the Garfield cur-

riculum.

The district will not be charged a cent as LMI receives grants from private and non-profit foundations, school officials said.

George Khoury, director of public relations for the school district, called the plan a "win-win" situation.

Participating teachers will log on and off a central computer and a switchboard will transfer calls to their homes, said Melendez.

While hotlines have been in use more than 10 years, teachers were stuck behind a bank of phones for a limited number of hours. But with modern telephone technology teachers and students are literally a phone call away, day or night.

A student doing homework in

the early morning hours, for example, will be able to seek help from teachers in other parts of the country.

More than 1,000 teachers throughout the country have joined the program, Melendez said.

Teacher reaction has been good, said school officials, and the benefits of the system far outweigh its pitfalls, said Frank Barnhart, head of the high school's math department and a member of a liaison committee between teachers and the schools superintendent's office.

Students, however, will have to be careful about consulting teachers using teaching methods different from those taught in their schools, Barnhart said.

Homework system coming to Union

By Chris Gatto
Managing Editor

Help with homework is now just a phone call away.

An agreement with a private company and the Board of Education will allow students who need assistance with school work to consult a teacher. What is different about this program is that it will be available at night and instruction will be offered over the phone.

This service is available through Learning Methods International Inc., a for-profit organization which receives grant funds through private industry. There is no cost to the district.

David Napier, general manager of LMI, said the program is offered to selected communities fee-free nationwide on a 24-hour basis. The program includes a pool of teachers across the United States who offer their services to LMI at a fee of \$20 per hour.

"They do this for selected districts nationwide," said board member Steven Edwards. "That's not to say they won't charge others in the future."

According to Edwards, the district was approached by Learning Methods and asked to come on board. Four districts in Union County, Kenilworth, Roselle, Garwood, and possibly Plainfield, have agreed to participate in the LMI system. The company is working with the county's school superintendent to implement it on a county basis.

The board member noted that Union was asked due to the reputation it has for high educational standards and decided to give the program a try.

Funding for LMI's program is derived through grants from private corporations and with Union signing on, Napier said it would allow the organization to request funding from businesses in the township. He said many organizations are contributing for the further education of their employees; LMI is looking for them to do the same for their families.

Presently there are 50,000 students in New Jersey who may utilize the features offered by LMI, and the company hopes to have several million on-line nationwide shortly. The Homework Hotline, which is only one of the three services offered to participating districts by LMI, provides a toll-free phone number which students wishing assistance may call 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Peak homework hours are between 8 and 9 p.m., Napier said, so a program that ends at 7 p.m. is limited. LMI, which at present is not in use by any colleges, also employs college professors, who are needed by students sometimes after 10 p.m. which is why teachers are utilized from all time zones across the country.

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Homework call-in available shortly

(Continued from Page 1)

Although teachers in the district are not obligated to participate, they may do so at their own convenience by setting their own hours. LMI does have criteria, though, for which subjects each individual is allowed to teach.

Napier said that teachers must have a minimum of five years experience in order to tutor students from other districts. "Experience is a factor in providing quality service," said Napier. "Sometimes the methods may vary also, so those with experience may more easily adjust."

Teachers who wish to enroll in this program may also be limited to instructing the courses they are currently teaching. "We want to make sure we maintain the highest quality."

Napier, who discussed LMI's plans for the district during a meeting with educators at the Board of Education Administration Building last Thursday, suggested teachers who participate have a second phone put in their residences. LMI will pay a maximum of \$60 for phone installation and up to \$9 per month for the second phone, he said.

Calling it the "ideal" part-time job because it can be done without even leaving home, Napier said similar systems have a proven rate of success in boosting test scores. He said East Orange has had a program in place for about six years where teachers go to a designated location for several hours and take phone calls, noting that with today's carjackings and muggings people would rather stay home.

Abuse of the program by teachers will not be tolerated, said Napier, noting that instructors should not give students difficult homework with the sole purpose of getting paid due to the number of calls. He did, however, recommend that students be given homework during the first four weeks the hotline is in place.

Students who call the number have a choice of teachers from whom they would like to receive instruction, which may include their regular in-school teacher if their instructor chooses to participate. If a student's teacher is a participant in the program, it does not mean that the student must be taught by that individual.

By calling 1 (800) 962-4222, students in Union may gain access to the tutorial program. Each school in the district has a passcode which must be entered by using the buttons on a

touch-tone phone, along with the area code and phone number from which the call is being made, when the hotline number is dialed.

Napier said that the service will also be available for those who have rotary phones in about two weeks.

Then students have the option of listening to the whole menu of subjects and grade levels, or entering "1" so that they may, if they know it, select the personal identification number for the teacher they would like. The student's grade level and subject area must also be entered.

If the teacher selected is not available, students have the option of selecting a new teacher or calling back at a later time. Napier said it is rare that a teacher will not be available for any particular subject. Subjects include general studies, mathematics, science, history and social studies, language arts and English, foreign languages, computer science and others.

The way the system is designed, a Union teacher who is available will be selected before the call is transferred to an instructor from another district. "Many students do not like to call their own teacher," said Napier, who noted it may be because they want to impress their instructor in school by knowing the correct answer.

So, it is not unrealistic that a student from Union will wind up being instructed by a teacher from Mississippi, or Maine, or Massachusetts or anywhere else. Once a connection is made to a teacher, the student must identify the problem and the teacher will attempt to assist.

Already in existence for three years, LMI encourages instructors to arrive at the answers to students'

questions at the same time, so that the students are not simply told the solutions.

Superintendent of Schools James Caulfield said the district would be able to pull out of the program at any point if it is not satisfied or if Learning Methods decides to charge a fee.

The district, which already utilizes homework hotlines at Burnet and Kawameeh middle schools, will be offering this new program at all schools in the district. The LMI program should be in operation by Dec. 31, Edwards said.

In addition to the Homework Hotline, LMI offers an Information Line and Teleconferencing. With the Information Line, a voice mailbox is created for each teacher in the school district that permits parents and students to access teachers by calling a toll-free number.

Each teacher may leave a general message regarding homework assignments and other information for an entire class. Personalized and confidential information such as test scores and grades may also be stored which may only be accessed with a PIN number.

This feature is especially beneficial for college students who currently may be getting the grades in the form of a list, said Napier, who recalled that when he was pursuing a higher education the professor used to post scores by name so anyone could see.

Teleconferencing provides the district with the opportunity to attend Scholastic Aptitude Test review courses on each of the four Saturdays prior to exam dates. Also provided are special programs, such as recognized academic and public lecturers.